



Abuse or neglect represents a threat to the safety, health and well-being, and dignity which our society expects for all individuals as our civil and basic human rights.

Abuse or neglect often happens in our own homes, and by people we know and trust. Sometimes it is clearly recognised, at other times it may be difficult to identify.

For example, vulnerable people may be 'groomed' into believing someone is a friend and that they are acting in their best interests. Abuse may happen through ignorance or due to the burden of caring. Abuse or neglect also occurs in care home settings, hospitals or housing units and can be malicious intent or due to the delivery of poor quality of care and poor professional standards.

### **What are abuse and neglect?**

Abuse or neglect is any behaviour towards a person that deliberately or unknowingly causes him or her harm, endangers their life or violates their rights. This may be the result of deliberate intent, negligence or ignorance. Exploitation can be a common theme in the experience of abuse or neglect. Whilst it is acknowledged that abuse or neglect can take different forms, the Care Act guidance identifies the following types of abuse or neglect:

**Physical abuse** – including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions

**Domestic abuse** – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called 'honour' based violence

**Sexual abuse** – including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting

**Psychological abuse** – including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks

**Financial or material abuse** – including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, the misuse or misappropriation of property, possession or benefits

**Modern slavery** – Slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude, traffickers and slave masters using whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force people into a life of abuse, servitude and inhuman treatment

**Discriminatory abuse** - including harassment, slurs or similar treatment because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion

**Organisational abuse** – including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as hospital or care home for example, or in relation to care provided in a person's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within the organisation

**Neglect and acts of omission** - including ignoring medical, emotional or physical needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition or heating

**Self-neglect** – this covers a wide range of behaviour around neglecting to care for one's own personal hygiene, health or surroundings. It should be noted that self-neglect may not prompt a section 42 enquiry. An assessment should be made on a case by case basis. A decision on whether a response is required under safeguarding will depend on the adult's ability to protect themselves by controlling their own behaviour. There may come a point when they are no longer able to do this, without external support. This may include hoarding when the hoarding becomes a serious risk to an adult with care and support needs.

**This is not an exhaustive list; there can be other types of abuse which may include:**

**Radicalisation** – radicalisation is comparable to other forms of exploitation, such as grooming and child sexual exploitation. Radicalisation's aim is to attract people to another way of reasoning, inspire new recruits and embed extreme views and persuade vulnerable people of another cause's legitimacy. This may be through face-to-face encounters or through social media. Click on the link below for further information:

**Hate crime** – crimes committed against someone because of their disability, gender identity, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation are hate crimes and should be reported to the police.

**Mate crime** – The term Mate Crime is generally understood to refer to the befriending of people who are perceived by perpetrators to be vulnerable for the purpose of taking advantage of/exploiting and/or abusing them.

### **Who are vulnerable adults at risk of abuse?**

A vulnerable adult is defined as a person who is 18 years or over and "who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation."

### **Heron Care's aim**

Identifying abuse requires awareness on the part of both professionals and people within the general population, our aim is to:

- Prevent abuse or neglect from happening.
- Take a robust approach to reported incidents
- Let people make choices, and take risks which is balanced with support & protection
- Provide protection and support when and where it is needed

### **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

Promotion of equality of opportunity is created by supporting vulnerable adults to live with dignity, respect and free from abuse with greater independence and be able to develop their full potential. Safeguarding principles promote positive attitudes towards vulnerable adults and ensure the maintenance of independence and ability to participate in public life. Whilst safeguarding does not directly relate to the promotion of good relations, the protection of vulnerable adults from discrimination may contribute to maintaining the status quo or preventing deterioration in relations.

The outcome of safeguarding investigations is monitored for information relating to both the alleged victim and the person who may have caused harm within ethnic groups.

## **The strategy: how we will achieve our aims**

The strategy brings together the many elements within the work of safeguarding vulnerable adults and will enable the multi agency safeguarding board to effectively monitor these key aims to ensure their implementation and effectiveness.

### **Increasing awareness of abuse and safeguarding within Heron care.**

We will target information to those at risk, for example via home care service and to direct payment and personal budget recipients. And regularly update information on Heron Care's website. We will complete a programme of awareness training and development.

The development of a named care manager of Heron Care enabled increased safeguarding awareness training for social care staff.

Heron Care will inform all relevant departments in relation to a safeguarding alert .CQC, Police and local safeguarding board.

### **Information sharing**

Where there are safeguarding concerns staff have a duty to share information. It is important to remember that in most serious cases lack of information sharing can be a significant contributor when things go wrong.

#### **Information should be shared with consent wherever possible.**

A person's right to confidentiality is not absolute and may be overridden where there is evidence that sharing information is necessary to support an investigation or where there is a risk to others e.g. immediate risk to the service user or in the best interests of public safety, police investigation, implications for regulated activities or services provided.

### **Steps to be taken where an allegation of abuse concerns the actions of a member of staff**

Where an allegation concerns the actions of a member of staff it is the duty of all those concerned to report the matter to a senior manager to ascertain next steps to be taken. It is important to ensure that any action taken in this circumstance protects the rights and wishes of the vulnerable adult, protects the rights of the member of staff concerned and enables managers to take appropriate action either on behalf of the vulnerable adult or in respect of the staff member.